

there is going to be any there eating the dinner. There may be some serving the dinner because a minimum wage employee, if they work full time an 8-hour day throughout the year would make \$10,500. And that would not get them even to the hors d'oeuvre course if they took their whole year's salary and put it there.

A \$50,000-a-plate dinner and the minimum wage and the Federal budget, how do we bring all of that together, because the issue in the budget is what we spend our money on, and who we think has the greatest claim to getting Federal attention.

My guess is most of the people who buy those dinners have something they want. It just does not pass the straight face test to say, oh no, they paid \$50,000 for dinner because they believe in good government or they wanted a decent meal. No, no, I think they want something. And I think we know what they want. They probably want some little tax benefit.

One of the things that we have done over and over again is we talk about spending programs, but we never talk about the fact that special tax benefits to individuals are also spending much, because we are taking money away that would be coming in.

We had last week on this floor a very important amendment pointing to that when we talked about the line-item veto. We said not only should the President be able to line item veto spending that looked like pork, but the President should be able to line item veto any special tax privileges.

Guess what? That lost. So I guess the dinner is going on because people still figure that is a possibility if they go to their dinner.

But I think when we look at America and when we look at our long historic tradition we have felt that there should be room in the budget for those who need the most help. That is how families do it. When American families sit around the table and they are in tough times they do not cut the kids out first, for heaven's sake, they do not say we will drop education first because they happen to think that is an investment. They tend to look at the parts of the budget that really are going to those who are best off in the family. And yet, somehow, because of how we collect revenues to run for office and everything else, we tend to distort our budget priorities.

Think how many people who get the minimum wage can make much of a campaign contribution. If you make \$10,500 a year, what kind of campaign contribution do you think you could make? How many fancy dinners do you think you can go to? What kind of clout do you think you are going to have in Washington trying to bring your case to the table? Does your case have to be traded off with balancing it for those who are the most well off?

We now understand there is a new deal on the table, and that is maybe people will go along with the minimum wage increase if we can have a capital

gains cut. I am not sure we are ever going to get to balancing the budget if we continue to do that, saying we just absolutely cannot do anything for those who are struggling along on the lowest rung unless we continue to do things for those who are on the upper rungs because otherwise I do not know what rich people will do. Maybe they will just get mad and not give money to campaigns anymore. Would that not be a terrible thing?

So, I think as we look at all of these issues that are floating around out there, I hope everybody listens to several very key things. No. 1, we have to stop kidding people we are going solve the deficit by finding some waste, fraud, and abuse. Anywhere we find waste, fraud, and abuse, sure, cut it, just cut out the tea tasters and those things, but we know that is not going to balance the budget. We have to do some other thing too and let us think about our very core priorities as we get to that.

SUPPORT FOR THE LINE-ITEM VETO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of February 11, 1994, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the line-item veto. This is an action we need to take to save this country from our runaway debt. It is an action we must take to end the irresponsible practices by this body. It is an action that is completely consistent with the wishes of our Founders.

Mr. Speaker, we are making significant changes in the way the Federal Government operates. I have listened to the arguments made by the other side against these changes, and I am struck by how little regard is shown for our Federal debt. Perhaps we do not understand the amount our debt costs us? Perhaps we think that these programs we are so afraid of cutting will survive even if we bankrupt the Nation. We owe \$4.8 trillion. I hear the other side talk about us hurting programs that benefit young people. They do not seem to understand that we are trying to save the future for young people all over America. We have no right to fund any program, no matter how well intentioned, at the expense of the children of the next generation.

I ran for this office because I have two little grandchildren. I saw the ever-rising debt and the dreadful impact it will have on their future. I am here to do something about the debt and free that burden from their future and from the future of young people throughout my district and throughout America. I support the line-item veto because the students in Sallie Bullock's calculus class at Madison County High in Danielsville, GA already owe \$310,760'. I support it because Mary Mills fifth grade class at Oconee

County Intermediate School in Watkinsville, GA already owes \$365,600. I support it because Martha Scroggs' kindergarten class at Episcopal Day School in Augusta already owes \$457,000. Mr. Speaker, the line-item veto is an important step for the future of these young people.

I have listened to the constitutional arguments against the line-item veto. To those people, I would share the words of Alexander Hamilton in Federalist No. 73. In response to those who stated that the veto would give the President too much power, Hamilton argued that the veto power was important because it limited the power of Congress.

The propriety of the thing does not turn upon the supposition of superior wisdom or virtue in the executive; but on the supposition that the legislative will not be infallible; That the love of power may sometimes betray it into a disposition to encroach upon the rights of the other members of the government; that a spirit of faction may sometimes pervert its deliberations; that the impressions of the moments may sometimes hurry it into measures which itself on mature reflection condemn.

Mr. Speaker, if Alexander Hamilton only knew what we have come to in this body. When \$20 million for a fingerprint facility in West Virginia is inserted into an emergency assistance bill for Los Angeles earthquake victims, we prove that Hamilton was right. When \$11½ million are spent on powerplant modernization in a shipyard about to be closed, we prove that we need to give the President the line-item veto. If Hamilton could see what we do here today, he would certainly support it as well.

One other argument that we hear is that it will be used by the President as a political weapon. Mr. Speaker, 43 Governors have the line-item veto. If it was being used as this evil political weapon as our opponents would suggest that it is, you would certainly think that far fewer States would have them. If it were being used irresponsibly by those who have it, it would be taken away. I believe that our opponents greatly overstate the danger of the use of the line-item veto. The veto power possessed by the President today is a far more powerful tool, but it has been used wisely. We have no reason to expect otherwise with the line-item veto.

Mr. Speaker, we are making significant changes in the way business is conducted by the Federal Government. The line-item veto is one more way for us to show the American people that we are making their Government more responsible.

INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of February 11, 1994, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, later in this session we will be

discussing efforts at reforming the welfare system in this country, and it is clearly the goal of both the Republicans and the Democrats to make sure that people move from welfare into the American economic system and that those individuals move into that economic system in the hopes of achieving economic self-sufficiency. It is clearly what the President has announced as he has discussed welfare reform and as he has discussed the minimum wage.

The minimum wage becomes key to that effort of moving people from welfare, from public assistance, from dependency, to economic self-sufficiency. We must make it clear that in this country those individuals that choose to go to work, those individuals that later we will seek to require to go to work, that they are making a logical economic choice for them and for their families.

The key to doing that is making sure that the minimum wage will boost people above the poverty level in this country; that when they make a decision to get up every morning and go to work and go to work all day long, that in fact when they come home to their families and their children, they will know they succeeded in lifting their family out of poverty. If we do not do that it is very difficult to rationalize to those individuals why in fact they should go to work.

The \$4.25 minimum wage that we have today does not do that for individuals, and it clearly does not do that for individuals who are working on behalf of themselves and their families.

What we see today is more children under the age of 6 are living in poverty than at any time in recent history, and 58 percent of those children are living in families where individuals go to work every day. They go to work on a part-time or full-time basis but they do not receive, they do not receive wages sufficient to keep their family above the poverty line.

We have got to make sure that that no longer is true. And that is why the increase in the minimum wage is so terribly important. Clearly, work must pay, and that is the signal that we must send in this country; that you go to work, it is worth your while to go to work to do that job and to provide for your family. That simply is not true.

The increase in the minimum wage that the President has asked us to support, 45 cents this year and 45 cents next year, will raise an individual above the poverty line. It unfortunately still does not address an individual that is working on behalf of a spouse and/or children in that family. But we have got to make that effort. This is the minimum that we can do on the minimum wage.

Historically, the increase in the minimum wage has had very, very substantial bipartisan support. When we addressed this exact same increase, 45 cents one year and 45 cents the next year, when it was presented to us by President Bush it was passed over-

whelmingly on a partisan basis; 383 Members in this House voted for it, 135 Democrats voted for it, crystallizing again that President Bush had the same goal that President Clinton did, and that is to make work pay, to get people to go to work and to be able to provide for their families.

I think it is unfortunate that we now see the Republican majority leader say to this country that he will oppose the minimum wage with every fiber in his body, that he will deny these individuals who are seeking to provide for their family the ability to go to work and come home above the poverty line.

I think it is unfortunate when we see the people of this House suggest that we cannot raise the minimum wage because we have to compete with wages in Mexico. I think we should have told the people of this country that that was the conditions on the passing of NAFTA, and that now Americans' wages are going to be tied to the wages of Mexico.

Is that the message we have for people that go to work in this country every day, that you can live at the standard of living provided people in Mexico? That simply cannot be.

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That simply cannot be. That cannot be the underpinnings of the American system of economics. It cannot be the underpinning of the free enterprise system, and it cannot be the underpinning for support for families in this country.

We have got to understand that Americans who go to work are entitled to participate in the American standard of living on behalf of themselves and for their families.

I am delighted to see that apparently the support for the minimum wage is not complete across the Republican spectrum, because this weekend we found out Senator DOLE is not opposed to it. The question is only what we will have to pay to achieve the minimum wage, and the indications are that if you cut the capital gains tax, where 75 percent of the benefit goes to 10 percent of the population, then and only then are the Republicans prepared to try to help the millions of American families who go to work every day yet remain in poverty.

BAILOUT OF MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUSSLE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. BUNNING] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. Speaker, article I of the U.S. Constitution vests the power of the purse in the Congress. Unfortunately, the President of the United States has taken it upon himself to do an end run around the Constitution, the Congress, and the American people to bail out Mexico.

Mr. Clinton has pushed the barriers past the breaking point. He is basing

his power grab on a twisted reading of his authority under the Gold Reserve Act of 1934. That is the law which established the Exchange Stabilization Fund that Mr. Clinton has raided to save Mexico.

The Exchange Stabilization Fund was not meant for the kind of shenanigans that Mr. Clinton is trying to pull. It was designed to ensure that we would have an orderly and stable system of exchange rates.

In other words, the Gold Reserve Act gives the President authority to stabilize the U.S. dollar and protect its value. It does not give the President the authority to prop up the currency of Mexico.

It seems that Mr. Clinton needs to take a refresher course in constitutional law. Only Congress has the authority to appropriate money.

Apparently, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, doesn't think too much of Mr. Clinton's bailout scheme either.

The Washington Times reported on February 1 that the Exchange Stabilization Fund, the IMF and the BIS do not have the resources to deal with Mexico's problems. He went on to say that the bailout should be addressed by the political leaders of the country because of its broad implications.

Mr. Greenspan is not alone in thinking that this financing scheme is a multibillion-dollar disaster waiting to happen.

The Hertigage Foundation had warned that this bailout was a bad deal as early as January 25. A study by Hertigage warned,

The proposed loan guarantees may bail out Mexico this year, but they will not prevent another crisis unless the Mexican Government corrects the fundamental structural problems that caused the peso's collapse.

Our financial partners in Europe seem to understand the problem. When it came to a vote at the International Monetary Fund, Germany, Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland all abstained from voting rather than support Mr. Clinton's plan.

I applaud my colleague, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, for pushing the envelope on this issue by introducing a privileged resolution that will put the House on record as to where we stand on this bailout.

His resolution will put us on track to determine whether the President has acted outside the scope of his authority.

We have all sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States. If the President is wrongly seizing power from the legislative branch, it is our duty to stop him.

Mr. TAYLOR's privileged resolution is just the thing to start the inquiry into what I believe may be the power grab of our time. Congress, not the President or the Courts, is charged with the power to spend the money.